



Worple Road, Epsom KT18 7AA
Registered Charity Number 1155711
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November 2021

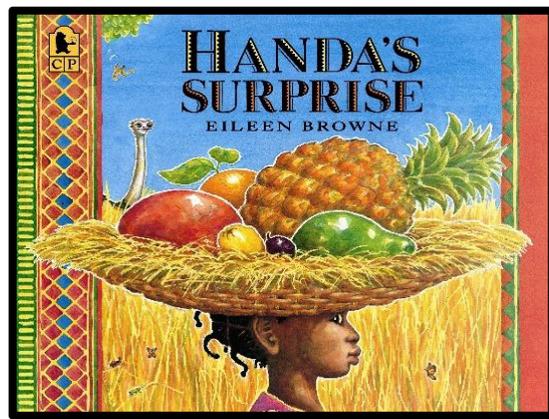
Dear Parents/Carers

Please find an overview of some of the fun and learning we have enjoyed last half term.

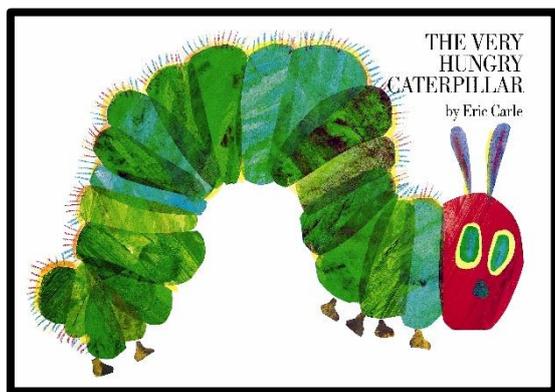
This September has seen the introduction of an updated Early Years Foundation Stage which we are very excited about. In response to the updated framework, we are focusing our planning for learning around some core story books and we hope to introduce a few extra opportunities to engage with our local community.



We are very pleased to let you know that our Pre-School has been selected by Surrey County Council to take part in the Early Talk Boost program. We are looking forward to introducing Early Talk Boost sessions to support the development of the children's communication skills.



Our first story book of the school year was Handa's Surprise. The children enjoyed listening to the story and experienced touching, smelling, observing, and tasting pieces of real fruit from the story. We even managed to include some science and new vocabulary when the children explored the process of rotting. During our Handa's Surprise week, the children explored the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Mirrors were used to observe features and expressions and the children made some playdough faces.



The Very Hungry Caterpillar followed on nicely from Handa's Surprise, we continued to talk about the healthy food we eat and how this helps our body grow strong. The children explored colour mixing and changes by making caterpillars with red and green playdough. There were caterpillar related craft activities which enabled the children to practise cutting, sticking, and combining materials create for a purpose. Sharing the story, and whilst crafting and creating, the children learnt all about the caterpillar lifecycle.



Thank you for all the donations we received for our Harvest collection. The supplies were delivered to Epsom and Ewell Food Bank. Not only have we helped this valuable local initiative, but it has also given us an opportunity to teach the children about helping others.

Our core stories during harvest were Rosie's Walk and The Little Red Hen.

This year, we were lucky to have had a good harvest ourselves. The carrots children planted in the spring had grown huge! The children picked them and had the chance to try them as a snack!

We were pleased to see some beans that one of our children brought in to show us all. Some of the children practised measuring with them!

The children all really enjoy making their own dough to play with. As a change for harvest, they made bread dough which they enjoyed cutting with different tools, making bread rolls to play with and to smell.

At the start of autumn, the children took part in a nature hunt in the garden. We have used lots of the objects the children found to make prints in playdough, food for the mud kitchen and as craft pieces to collage. Finding fallen objects is a great chance to practise counting, explore nature, learn new words. By adding these objects to play and craft, the children become imaginative and creative as they use them in new ways.



Playdough or something similar is always on offer at Pre-School. For autumn, the children have used the dough to practise mixing colours by adding paint, and then mixing different coloured dough to make new

colours. Some of the children combined red and yellow to make orange! One day we made black dough with googly eyes which the children really enjoyed using to create facial features to add to pumpkins, creating a Halloween face. Some were happy faces and some sad, some faces represented family and friends, and lots of the children really enjoyed using the camera to take a photograph. Other days we made smelly dough by adding herbs and spices and we made textured dough with rice, pasta, and oats. The children decided which smells or textures were nice/not nice and were able to learn new words to describe their experiences.



Feeding the five thousand

The morning children all enjoyed listening to the Feeding the five thousand Bible story. Which was a wonderful opportunity to introduce them to the story of Jesus ahead of Christmas. The children joined in by counting the bread and fish and we talk about sharing what we have so that everybody has enough.

Leading on from this, our morning children have been busy preparing their Christmas card designs which are now on their way to the printers. Further information to follow later this term.

This half term



Parent meetings

All our new starters should have had the opportunity to speak to their key person last half term. This half term we will contact our 'morning' parents/carers. Please keep an eye out for an email with your appointment.

During this half term we are looking forward to lots of celebrations and events including a new Thai festival, which one of our families has made us aware of.

4th November – Diwali

5th November - Guy Fawkes

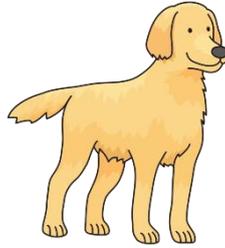
11th November - Remembrance Day

19th – 21st November - Thai festival of light known as the Loy Krantong Festival

30th November - St Andrew's Day

December – Christmas

Please let us know if there are any celebrations or events that you would like us to celebrate or introduce the children to.



Visit from a Therapy Dog

A 'Therapy Dog' will be visiting the Pre-School children in the afternoon on Thursday 17th November and in the morning of Monday 22nd November. This is a fantastic opportunity for the children to interact with a dog in a controlled environment. Therapy dogs are sometimes called 'comfort dogs' and are trained to be friendly, calm, gentle, patient and at ease in all situations. They are not sensitive to rough stroking or petting, have excellent obedience levels and are tolerant of unusual places and children.

Please let us know if you have any concerns, if your child is fearful of dogs, or if there are any allergies to consider.

Pyjama Drama



We are pleased to announce that Pyjama Drama will attend the Pre-School on Wednesday mornings this half term, to provide a fun and interactive drama session for the children. Please see the link below to find out more about Pyjama Drama.

[An Overview of What We Do | Child Education Franchise | Drama for Kids \(pyjamadrama.com\)](https://pyjamadrama.com)



Music Sessions with Catherine

Our music teacher, Catherine, started music sessions with the morning children last half term. During this half term Catherine will be joining us weekly, alternating between Mondays and Thursdays. Catherine's sessions are an opportunity for the children to learn new songs, joining in with musical instruments, props, taking on a part, dancing and singing. Catherine follows our planning, linking songs to the seasons, themes, and celebrations at Pre-School. The children also have the opportunity to observe Catherine as she leads the session by playing her keyboard.



Nativity - Morning Children Only

We are delighted to announce that we will hold our annual nativity for the morning children on the morning of 10th December at St Martin's Church, Epsom. We are planning a rehearsal at the church on Friday 3rd December. To make this event feasible, there will be no normal morning session on both dates mentioned above. Parents/carers should drop off and collect children directly from the church. However, for those children who stay for the long-day session on a Friday, they will be able to return to pre-school on 3rd / 10th December. Further details will follow.

Our afternoon session will run as usual on 3rd and 10th December.

End of Term – Afternoon Children, Thursday 16th December

The term will end on Thursday 16th December with a Christmas party for our afternoon children, from 1.30pm until 3pm. The party is for all the afternoon children, even if Thursday is not their normal day of attendance.

All children should arrive at the later time of 1.30pm.

There will be party games and food to enjoy, together with a visit from Father Christmas! There is a charge of £10.00 for the party included on your fee invoice (no normal fees for this afternoon). Please delete if your child will be unable to attend. This is the last day of term for the afternoon children and there will be no afternoon session on Friday 17th December.

End of Term – Morning Children, Friday 17th December

We will be holding a Christmas party for all our morning children on Friday 17th December, from 10.30am – 1pm. The party is for all the morning children, even if Friday is not their normal day of attendance. Please note that there will be no 'long-day' sessions on this day. There will be a party entertainer, together with party games and food, followed by a visit from Father Christmas! **All children should arrive at the later time of 10.30am and should be collected at 1pm.**

Pre-School closed on Monday 6th June

Although a long way off now, please note that Pre-School will be closed on Monday 6th June, to celebrate the extra Bank Holiday for the Queen's platinum jubilee.

Gifts for staff

At our pre-school parents / carers are discouraged from giving individual gifts to members of staff. We understand that families are keen to show their appreciation to the staff, especially at the end of term or Christmas. However, the Management Committee organise an 'anonymous' collection twice a year, where families can donate, if they wish, to a collection which is distributed amongst all members of the team. Parents can choose to donate, or not, and there is no expectation that families should do so. We do not want families to feel any added pressure that they should purchase gifts for staff, when it is unaffordable for many families and unnecessary. Thank you!

Reminders

1. Thank you for queuing politely whilst waiting to drop off and collect your child. As we are sure you all appreciate, there are times when we need to ask parents/carers to skip to the front. We do try to be fair, if you have not been asked to come straight past, please wait patiently. Thank you!
2. If your child is wearing a nappy, wherever possible, please make sure they arrive in a fresh nappy.

3. Please can we ask that you ensure coats, jumpers, food boxes and bags are all labelled.
4. Where possible, please try to ensure your child has an early lunch before arriving for their afternoon session. We understand that it may be difficult sometimes, so please let us know if you are sending in extra food to account for a missed lunch. Otherwise, please can we ask you to send in smaller quantities of food, such as a small box of chopped fruit as we are finding that it is taking a long time for the children to get through all their lovely food, and we do not want them to miss all the other things we have to do.
5. If your child has been sent home in clothes from Pre-School, please can you return them to us as our supplies, particularly of trousers / leggings are getting very low.

For safety, please ensure that grapes are cut lengthways



As always, if you have any questions or concerns, or something you are just not sure about, please just let one of us know!

Kind regards

St Martin's Pre-School Team

Useful links

Epsom Foodbank – essential emergency service for people unable to afford food.

[Epsom and Ewell Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis](#)

Home-Start – a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through their challenging times.

[Home-Start UK](#)

Family Information Service – useful local information relating to services for children and families living in Surrey

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/families>

The Samaritans – support with 'whatever you are going through':

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Crisis – for those faced with homelessness:

<https://www.crisis.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice – for information and advice for all. Currently updated with latest Coronavirus information.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

NHS – For all the latest medical advice and guidance – including Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.nhs.uk/>

Eric - for help with potty training

<https://www.eric.org.uk/>

SEND Local Offer – Online hub for 0-25 year olds with Special Educational Needs or a Disability

<https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/home.page>

NSPCC – Safeguarding and child protection. Find information here regarding COVID-19 and returning to school.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

I Can – communication charity.

[I CAN, the children's communication charity](#)